

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed December 29, 2006. Claims 1, 7, 13, 18, 22, 26, 30, 35, and 40 have been amended. Claims 1-7, 10-13, and 16-48 are presently pending. No new matter has been added.

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the telephone interview with the Applicants' representative, Bruce Black, on March 20, 2007. During the interview, the Ellis reference was discussed.

§102 and §103 Rejections

Claims 1-3, 7, 13, and 45-48 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0251827 to Ellis et al. ("Ellis"). Claims 4-6, 10-12, 16-33, 35-38, and 40-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ellis in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,449,624 to Hammack et al. ("Hammack"). Claims 34, 39, and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ellis in view of Hammack in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,523,067 to Mi et al. ("Mi"). The Applicants traverse these rejections.

As an initial matter, the lead paragraphs (paragraphs 5, 14, and 26) for each of the rejections in the Office Action are incorrect as demonstrated by the remaining text of the Office Action. In particular, the claims listed in paragraph 5 are not all discussed in the subsequent paragraphs 6-12 and the Patent No. cited after Ellis in paragraphs 14 and 26 does not correspond to Ellis but rather to the previously cited Cragun reference. The Applicants have attempted to reconstruct the current rejections based on the remaining text of the Office Action.

Each of independent claims 1, 7, 13, 18, 22, 26, 30, 35, and 40 recites a multimedia communication network system comprising a household having a plurality of access devices and a plurality of user objects. Each of the user objects defines interaction of a respective user with the multimedia communication network system and a user can access the system by logging on to the user object. Moreover, a plurality of the user objects are stored simultaneously on at least one of the access devices. Thus, the present invention is directed to systems that utilize user objects (e.g.,

individual user profiles). A user logs onto a respective user object to access the system. The user object can be accessed from more than one – or even all – of the client systems/access devices, with no need for the user to re-enter his configuration information or delete other information already stored for another user.

Ellis does not teach or suggest this arrangement. Instead of user objects associated with a respective user, Ellis teaches settings/profiles that are location or equipment based. (See, e.g., Figures 11, 13, and 14, as well as the text at [0092], [0093].) These profiles/settings are configurations for individual items of television equipment and are not specific to a user. In other words, each item of television equipment has only one stored profile. Although the television equipment may be identified by a user's name (e.g., parent's room or children's room) the profile in Ellis for that particular television equipment is the same regardless of the actual user. For example, if a parent uses the television in the children's room the profile for that television is the same as if the children were using that television. If the parent has set parental controls blocking certain types of programs on the children's television then the parent will also be blocked from watching those programs on the children's television (unless the parent overrides or changes the profile on that television.) The profiles/settings in this particular example are related to the television in the children's room, not a profile for the children themselves. In other words, the profiles/settings are equipment-specific, not user-specific. Accordingly, these profiles/settings are not user objects as recited in the claims because the profiles/settings are not associated with a respective user of the access devices/client systems.

Furthermore, there is no teaching in Ellis of multiple user objects. Ellis does disclose that program guide settings can be shared with another device using a user password (Ellis, [0094]), but there is no indication that there is more than one such user password per household.

In addition, Ellis does not teach or suggest that the plurality of user objects are stored simultaneously on at least one of the access devices, as recited in each of the independent claims. Although the equipment profiles of each piece of equipment can be accessed from at least one of the

televisions (Ellis, [110], [0093]), Ellis does not teach or suggest that multiple profiles are actually stored on any one piece of equipment.

Therefore, Ellis does not teach or suggest every element of the claims. For at least these reasons, claims 1, 7, 13, 18, 22, 26, 30, 35, and 40, as well as the remainder of the claims which depend therefrom, are patentable over Ellis. The Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of all of the present claims.

Claims 4-6, 10-12, and 16-29 also recite assigning a ticket number for configuration information. The Office Action acknowledges that Ellis does not teach or suggest assigning a ticket number. Office Action, pp. 4. The Office Action turns to Hammack.

The present rejection of these claims over Ellis in view of Hammack has been created by taking portions of two references in unrelated areas of technology and combining them without any consideration whether one of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make the combination. Ellis is directed to an interactive television program guide system. Ellis, Title. Hammack, on the other hand, is directed to “[p]rocess control systems, like those used in chemical, petroleum or other processes....” Hammack, Col. 1:12-13. Hammack is nonanalogous art with respect to the interactive television program guide system of Ellis. (See, M.P.E.P. §2141.01(a).) These two references are entirely unrelated to one another and one of ordinary skill in the art would not turn to the chemical or petroleum process control systems of Hammack to modify the television program guide system of Ellis. The Office Action fails to provide the required motivation for modification of Ellis in view of Hammack, particularly in view of the unrelated areas of technology described in these two references, as required to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. M.P.E.P. §2143. For at least these additional reasons, claims 4-6, 10-12, and 16-29 are patentable over the cited references. The Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection of these claims.

Claims 34, 39, and 44 recite an update vector determined as a function of bit vectors where the function comprises the logical-OR of the bit vectors associated with identifiers that are more recent than the received identifier. The update vector is directed to assisting in the update of

the configuration of a user object. The Office Action admits that Ellis does not teach or suggest this claim element. Office Action, p. 8. The Office Action relies on Mi for such a teaching. Mi, however, does not teach or suggest determining an update vector.

Mi is directed to a system for using Internet based Caller ID for controlling access to objects stored on a computer. Mi, Title. The portion of Mi (Column 3, lines 10-20 and Column 4, lines 5-40) cited in the Office Action is directed to verifying and granting user access as acknowledged in the Office Action. This disclosure in Mi is in no way related to generating an update vector. Although the user object may be used to grant access, the update vector is directed to providing information about changes in the configuration of the user object. Mi does not teach or suggest an update vector that is used in making changes to a configuration of a user object.

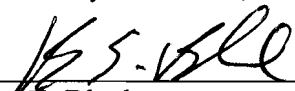
One of ordinary skill in the art would not turn to Mi's teaching regarding verification and user access to modify Ellis to include an update vector determined as a function of the logical-OR of bit vectors. There is no motivation to combine these two disparate disclosures. The references are directed to two non-analogous situations. This lack of motivation for making the proposed combination of Ellis and Mi prevents the establishment of a *prima facie* case of obviousness. M.P.E.P. §2143. For at least this additional reason, claims 34, 39, and 44 are patentable over the cited references. The Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection of these claims.

The Applicants argued this position in the previous response. The present Office Action fails to acknowledge or address this argument. The Applicants respectfully request that if the rejection of these claims is maintained, the next Office Action should address the Applicants' arguments regarding claims 34, 39, and 44.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If the Examiner has any questions or concerns, the Applicant encourages the Examiner to contact the Applicant's representative, Bruce Black, by telephone to discuss the matter.

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Respectfully submitted,

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